TOP SECRET

HANDLE VIA TALENT-KEYHOLE CONTROL SYSTEM

NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

16 MAR 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. HELMS

SUBJECT: Discussion of "Spy Satellite" Programs

I have learned that at the meeting of the North Atlantic Council of Ministers on February 24, which was attended by members of our SALT Delegation, Mr. Brosio, the Secretary General, verbally raised an issue on the possible Soviet destruction of one of our "spy satellites." Apparently, Mr. Brosio had formulated his concern based upon an article appearing in the French press. General Royal Allison quite properly responded to Mr. Brosio that he had no information on the subject and the issue apparently was then dropped.

In view of this occurrence, I feel that it would be advisable for CIA again to caution the cleared people involved with NATO and SALT against becoming involved in open discussions of our reconnaissance satellite program. I feel that this should be accomplished prior to SALT IV since the topics of national means of verification and non-interference with national means are key elements in the formal and informal closed discussions.

I would appreciate being informed of the action taken on the matter.

Bob

F. Robert Naka
Deputy Director

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NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

February 24, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR COLONEL SWEENEY
DR. NAKA

SUBJECT: Question Raised at NATO Meeting on Soviet Anti-Satellite Capability

Yesterday, February 24, several members of the U. S. SALT delegation traveled to Brussels to brief the NATO Council of Ministers on the progress of the SALT talks and of the prospects for the imminent Vienna round.

This morning, Captain Kruzel from ACSAN, who went to the Brussels meeting with General Allison, called and asked me to look at a paper which was obtained at the meeting. A copy of the paper is attached. Mr. Brosio, the NATO Secretary General, passed this paper to Ambassador Ellsworth on February 22 and then verbally raised the issue in the meeting on February 24. There was concern at the ministerial level that a specific non-interference with national means clause may not be incorporated in an eventual SALT agreement.

The basic conclusion raised in the paper was apparently derived from reports in the French press. Mr. Gerard Smith, a SALT negotiator, deferred comment on the issue to General Allison who responded that he had no information on the subject.

Today General Allison was asking for clarification on the validity of the paper. He is to receive a briefing from DIA on the COSMOS 373, 374 and 375 episode. I told Captain Kruzel that the issue is valid but that there were several errors in the paper. Specifically regarding

Item 2), we have no information that one of our satellites has been subject to interference by the Soviets. It may be likely that the French press was misconstruing the operational difficulties of 647 and concluded that the Soviets had interferred with the satellite.

I mentioned to Captain Kruzel that there seemed to be a more important issue raised by the paper--that being the questioning of aspects of the U. S. "spy satellite program" in an international forum. I requested Captain Kruzel to impress upon General Allison the fact that the U. S. government does not openly discuss the "fact of" satellite reconnaissance. That this paper was passed to the Council of Ministers prior to yesterday's meeting is even more disturbing.

RECOMMENDATION: We feel that the CIA should attempt to reapprise representatives of the State Department associated with NATO and SALT of the current policy regarding discussion of satellite reconnaissance. To the right is a memorandum for Dr. Naka's signature to be sent to Mr. Helms requesting that action be taken to caution the appropriate individuals against participating in any open discussion of our program. Request that Dr. Naka sign the memorandum.

[redacted]
HAROLD S. COYLE, JR.
Major, USAF

Perfection of a system for the destruction of spy satellites

During the past few days it has been reported in the Press that the White House and the CIA are worried about the series of discoveries made by NASA which have led the American authorities to conclude that the Soviets have for some time possessed a new anti-satellite weapon. The facts which have led to this conclusion are as follows:

1) In October 1970 the Soviets simultaneously placed three Cosmos satellites, bearing respectively nos. 373, 374 and 375 in orbit. The progress of these machines was followed by NASA technicians on their radar screen. Cosmos 374 and 375 exploded suddenly in a spiral of smoke.

2) More recently, just a few weeks ago in fact, US specialists found to their astonishment that one of their spy satellites, responsible for an important mission, had been destroyed in the same way as the two Soviet satellites had been in October 1970, as described above. They conclude that the Soviets have succeeded in perfecting a weapon system based on the use of laser ray capable of disintegrating any enemy satellite, and that the experiment which they viewed last October was in fact a test during which the real mission of Cosmos 373 was to destroy Cosmos 374 and Cosmos 375.

Thus given to

Basis to Ellsworth 2226

NATO SECY GNL

SALT

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